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AN
Historical Narration
Concerning
HERESIE,
And the
Punishment thereof.

BY
T H O M A S H O B B E S
OF
M A L M S B U R Y.



L O N D O N:
Printed in the Year 1680.

Historical Dictionary

Containing

HERBERT

And

Political History

OF THE



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A N
HISTORICAL NARRATION
Concerning

H E R E S I E,

And the PUNISHMENT thereof.

THe word *Heretic* is Greek, and signifies a taking of any thing, and particularly the taking of an Opinion. After the study of Philosophy begun in *Greece*, and the Philosophers disagreeing amongst themselves, had started many Questions, not onely about things Natural, but also Moral and Civil; because every man took what Opinion he pleased, each several Opinion was called a *Heretic*; which signified no more than a private Opinion, without reference to truth or falshood. The beginners of these Heresies were chiefly *Pythagoras*, *Epicurus*, *Zeno*, *Plato*, and *Aristotle*; men who as they held many Errours, so also found they out many true and useful Doctrines, in all kinds of Learning: and for that cause were well esteemed of by the greatest Personages of their own times; and so also were some few of their Followers.

But the rest, ignorant men, and very often needy Knaves, having learned by heart the Tenets, some of *Pythagoras*, some of *Epicurus*, some of *Zeno*, some of *Plato*, some of *Aristotle*, and pretending to take after them, made use thereof to get their Living by the teaching of Rich mens Children that happened to be in love with these famous Names. But by their ignorant Discourse, sordid and ridiculous Manners, they were generally despised, of what Sect or Heretic soever they were; whether they were *Pythagoreans*, or *Epicureans*, or *Stoicks* (who followed *Zeno*) or *Academicks* (Followers of *Plato*)

or *Peripateticks* (Followers of *Aristotle* :) For these were the names of Heresies, or (as the *Latines* call them) *Sects*, à *sequendo*, so much talkt of from after the time of *Alexander* till this present day, and that have perpetually troubled or deceived the people with whom they lived, and were never more numerous than in the time of the Primitive Church.

But the Heresie of *Aristotle* was more predominant than any, or perhaps than all the rest : nor was the name of Heresie then a disgrace, nor the word Heretick at all in use, though the several *Sects*, especially the *Epicureans* and the *Stoicks*, hated one another ; and the *Stoicks* being the fiercer men, used to revile those that differed from them with the most despicable words they could invent.

It cannot be doubted, but that, by the preaching of the Apostles and Disciples of Christ in *Greece* and other parts of the Roman Empire, full of these Philosophers, many thousands of men were converted to the Christian Faith, some really, and some feignedly, for factious ends, or for need ; (for Christians lived then in common, and were charitable :) and because most of these Philosophers had better skill in Disputing and Oratory than the Common people, and thereby were better qualified both to defend and propagate the Gospel, there is no doubt (I say) but most of the Pastors of the Primitive Church were for that reason chosen out of the number of these Philosophers ; who retaining still many Doctrines which they had taken up on the authority of their former Masters, whom they had in reverence, endeavoured many of them to draw the Scriptures every one to his own Heresie. And thus at first entred Heresie into the Church of Christ. Yet these men were all of them Christians, as they were when they were first baptized : Nor did they deny the Authority of those Writings which were left them by the Apostles and Evangelists, but interpreted them many times with a bias to their former Philosophy. And this Dissention amongst themselves, was a great scandal to the Unbelievers, and which not onely obstructed the way of the Gospel, but also drew scorn and greater persecution upon the Church.

For remedy whereof, the chief Pastors of Churches did use, at the rising of any new Opinion, to assemble themselves for

for the examining and determining of the same ; wherein, if the Author of the Opinion were convinced of his Errour, and subscribed to the Sentence of the Church assembled, then all was well again : but if he still persisted in it, they laid him aside, and considered him but as an Heathen man ; which, to an unfeigned Christian, was a great ignominy, and of force to make him consider better of his own Doctrine ; and sometimes brought him to the acknowledgment of the Truth. But other punishment they could inflict none, that being a right appropriated to the Civil Power. So that all the punishment the Church could inflict, was onely Ignominy ; and that among the faithful, consisting in this, that his company was by all the Godly avoided, and he himself branded with the name of *Heretick* in opposition to the whole Church, that condemned his Doctrine. So that *Catholick* and *Heretick* were terms relative ; and here it was that *Heretick* became to be a Name, and a name of disgrace, both together.

The first and most troublesome Heresies in the Primitive Church, were about the Trinity. For (according to the usual curiosity of Natural Philosophers) they could not abstain from disputing the very first Principles of Christianity, into which they were baptized, *In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*. Some there were that made them allegorical. Others would make one Creator of Good, and another of Evil ; which was in effect to set up two Gods, one contrary to another ; supposing that causation of evil could not be attributed to God, without Impiety. From which Doctrine they are not far distant, that now make the first cause of sinful actions to be every man as to his own sin. Others there were that would have God to be a body with parts organical, as Face, Hands, Fore-parts and Back-parts. Others, that Christ had no real body, but was a meer Phantasm : (for Phantasms were taken then, and have been ever since, by unlearned and superstitious men, for things real and subsistent). Others denied the Divinity of Christ. Others, that Christ being God and Man, was two Persons. Others confess he was one Person, and withal that he had but one Nature. And a great many other Heresies arose from the too much adherence to the Philosophy of those times, whereof

some were suppressed for a time by St. *John's* publishing his Gospel, and some by their own unreasonableness vanished, and some lasted till the time of *Constantine* the Great, and after.

When *Constantine* the Great (made so by the assistance and valour of the Christian Souldiers) had attained to be the onely *Roman* Emperour, he also himself became a Christian, and caused the Temples of the Heathen gods to be demolished, and authorized Christian Religion onely to be publick. But in the latter end of his time, there arose a Dispute in the City of *Alexandria*, between *Alexander* the Bishop and *Arius* a Presbyter of the same City; wherein *Arius* maintained, first, That Christ was inferiour to his Father; and afterwards, That he was no God, alleadging the words of Christ, *My Father is greater than I*. The Bishop on the contrary alleadging the words of St. *John*, *And the Word was God*; and the words of St. *Thomas*, *My Lord and my God*. This Controversie presently amongst the Inhabitants and Souldiers of *Alexandria* became a Quarrel, and was the cause of much Bloudshed in and about the City; and was likely then to spread further, as afterwards it did. This so far concerned the Emperours Civil Government, that he thought it necessary to call a General Council of all the Bishops and other eminent Divines throughout the *Roman* Empire, to meet at the City of *Nice*. When they were assembled, they presented the Emperour with Libels of Accusation one against another. When he had received these Libels into his hands, he made an Oration to the Fathers assembled, exhorting them to agree, and to fall in hand with the settlement of the Articles of Faith, for which cause he had assembled them, saying, Whatsoever they should decree therein, he would cause to be observed. This may perhaps seem a greater indifferency than would in these days be approved of. But so it is in the History; and the Articles of Faith necessary to Salvation, were not thought then to be so many as afterwards they were defined to be by the Church of *Rome*.

When *Constantine* had ended his Oration, he caused the aforesaid Libels to be cast into the fire, as became a wise King and a charitable Christian. This done, the Fathers fell in
hand

hand with their business, and following the method of a former Creed, called now *The Apostles Creed*, made a Confession of Faith, *viz.* I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all things visible and invisible, (in which is condemned the Polytheism of the Gentiles.) And in one Lord Jesus Christ the only begotten Son of God, (against the many sons of the many gods of the Heathen.) Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, (against the *Arians*) Very God of very God, (against the *Valentinians*, and against the Heresie of *Apelles*, and others, who made Christ a meer Phantasm.) Light of Light, [This was put in for explication, and used before to that purpose, by *Tertullian*.] Begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father. In this again they condemn the Doctrine of *Arius* : for this word *Of one substance*, in Latine *Consubstantialis*, but in Greek *ὁμοούσιος*, that is, *Of one Essence*, was put as a Touchstone to discern an *Arian* from a *Catholick* : And much ado there was about it. *Constantine* himself, at the passing of this Creed, took notice of it for a hard word; but yet approved of it, saying, That in a divine Mystery it was fit to use *divina & arcana Verba*; that is, divine words, and hidden from humane understanding; calling that word *ὁμοούσιος* divine, not because it was in the divine Scripture, (for it is not there) but because it was to him *Arcanum*, that is, not sufficiently understood. And in this again appeared the indifferency of the Emperour, and that he had for his end, in the calling of the Synod, not so much the Truth, as the Uniformity of the Doctrine, and peace of his People that depended on it. The cause of the obscurity of this word *ὁμοούσιος*, proceeded chiefly from the difference between the Greek and Roman Dialect, in the Philosophy of the *Peripateticks*. The first Principle of Religion in all Nations, is, *That God is*, that is to say, that God really is Something, and not a meer fancy; but that which is really something, is considerable alone by it self, as being *somewhere*. In which sence a man is a thing real : for I can consider him *to be*, without considering any other thing *to be* besides him. And for the same reason, the Earth, the Air, the Stars, Heaven, and their parts, are all of them things real. And because whatsoever is real here, or there, or in
any

any place, has Dimensions, that is to say, Magnitude; and that which hath Magnitude, whether it be visible or invisible, is called by all the Learned *a Body*, if it be finite; and *Body* or *Corporeal*, if it be infinite: it followeth, that all real things, in that they are *somewhere*, are *Corporeal*. On the contrary, *Essence*, *Deity*, *Humanity*, and such-like names, signify nothing that can be considered, without first considering there is an *Ens*, a *God*, a *Man*, &c. So also if there be any real thing that is *white* or *black*, *hot* or *cold*, the same may be considered by it self; but *whiteness*, *blackness*, *heat*, *coldness*, cannot be considered, unless it be first supposed that there is some real thing to which they are attributed. These real things are called by the Latine Philosophers, *Entia subjecta, substantia*; and by the Greek Philosophers, τὰ ὄντα, ὑποκείμενα, ὑποσώματα. The other, which are *Incorporeal*, are called by the Greek Philosophers, εἶδη, ἀσχετλητά, φαντασματά; but most of the Latine Philosophers use to convert εἶδη into *substantia*, and so confound real and corporeal things with incorporeal; which is not well: for *Essence* and *substance* signify divers things. And this mistake is received, and continues still in these parts, in all Disputes both of Philosophy and Divinity: for in truth *Essentia* signifies no more, than if we should talk ridiculously of the *Isness* of the thing that *Is*. [By whom all things were made.] This is proved out of *St. John, cap. 1. vers. 1, 2, 3.* and *Heb. cap. 1. vers. 3.* and that again out of *Gen. 1.* where *God* is said to create every thing by his sole Word, as when he said, *Let there be Light, and there was Light.* And then, that *Christ* was that Word, and in the beginning with *God*, may be gathered out of divers places of *Moses*, *David*, and other of the Prophets. Nor was it ever questioned amongst Christians (except by the *Arians*) but that *Christ* was *God Eternal*, and his *Incarnation* eternally decreed. But the Fathers, all that write *Expositions* on this Creed, could not forbear to philosophize upon it, and most of them out of the Principles of *Aristotle*: which are the same the School-men now use; as may partly appear by this, that many of them, amongst their Treatises of Religion, have affected to publish *Logick* and *Physick* Principles according to the sense of *Aristotle*; as *Athanasius*, and *Damasce*.
And

And so some later Divines of Note, as *Zanchinus*, still confounding the Concret with the Abstract, *Dens* with *Deitas*, *Ens* with *Essentia*, *Sapiens* with *Sapientia*, *Æternus* with *Æternitas*. If it be for exact and rigid Truth sake, why do they not say also, that Holiness is a Holy man, Covetousness a Covetous man, Hypocrisie an Hypocrite, and Drunkenness a Drunkard, and the like, but that it is an Error? The Fathers agree that the Wisdome of God is the eternal Son of God, by whom all things were made, and that he was incarnate by the Holy Ghost, if they meant it in the Abstract: For if *Deitas* abstracted be *Dens*, we make two Gods of one. This was well understood by *Damascene*, in his Treatise *De Fide Orthodoxa*, (which is an Exposition of the *Nicene* Creed) where he denies absolutely that *Deitas* is *Dens*, lest (seeing God was made man) it should follow, the Deity was made man; which is contrary to the Doctrine of all the *Nicene* Fathers. The Attributes therefore of God in the Abstract, when they are put for God, are put *Metonymically*; which is a common thing in Scripture; for Example, *Prov.* 8. 28. where it is said, *Before the mountains were settled, before the Hills was I brought forth*; the Wisdome there spoken of being the Wisdome of God, signifies the same with the wise God. This kinde of speaking is also ordinary in all Languages. This considered, such abstracted words ought not to be used in Arguing, and especially in the deducing the Articles of our Faith; though in the Language of God's eternal Worship, and in all Godly Discourses, they cannot be avoided: and the Creed it self is less difficult to be assented to in its own words, than in all such Expositions of the Fathers. Who for us men and our Salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man. I have not read of any exception to this: For where *Athanasius* in his Creed says of the Son, *He was not made, but begotten*, it is to be understood of the Son as he was God Eternal; whereas here it is spoken of the Son as he is man. And of the Son also as he was man, it may be said he was begotten of the Holy Ghost; for a woman conceiveth

not but of him that begetteth ; which is also confirmed ,
Mat. 1. 20. That which is begotten in her (τὸ γέννηθαι) is of the
Holy Ghost. And was also Crucified for us under Pontius Pilate : He
suffered and was buried : And the third day he rose again according
to the Scriptures, and ascended into Heaven : and sitteth on the
right hand of the Father ; And he shall come again with Glory to
judge both the Quick and the Dead. Whose Kingdome shall
have no end. [Of this part of the Creed I have not met with
any doubt made by any Christian.] Hither the Council of
Nice proceeded in their general Confession of Faith, and no
further.

This finished, some of the Bishops present at the Council (seventeen or eighteen, whereof *Ensebins* Bishop of *Cæsarea* was one) not sufficiently satisfied, refused to subscribe till this Doctrine of *οὐσίαν* should be better explained. Thereupon the Council Decreed, that whosoever shall say that God hath parts, shall be Anathematized ; to which the said Bishops subscribed. And *Ensebins* by Order of the Council wrote a Letter, the Copies whereof were sent to every absent Bishop, that being satisfied with the reason of their subscribing, they also should subscribe. The reason they gave of their Subscription was this, *That they had now a form of words prescribed, by which, as a Rule, they might guide themselves so, as not to violate the Peace of the Church.* By this it is manifest, that no man was an Heretick, but he that in plain and direct words contradicted that Form by the Church prescribed, and that no man could be made *an Heretick by Consequence.* And because the said Form was not put into the body of the Creed, but directed only to the Bishops, there was no reason to punish any Lay-person that should speak to the contrary.

But what was the meaning of this Doctrine, *That God has no parts ?* Was it made Heresie to say, that God, who is a real substance, cannot be considered or spoken of as *here*, or *there*, or any where, which are parts of places ? Or that there is any real thing without length every way, that is to say, which hath no Magnitude at all, finite nor infinite ? Or is there any whole substance, whose two halves or three thirds are not the same with that whole ? Or did they mean to condemn the Argument of *Tertullian*, by which he confuted

futed *Apelles* and other Hereticks of his time ; namely, *Whatsoever was not Corporeal, was nothing but Fantasm, and not Corporeal*, for Heretical ? No certainly, no Divines say that. They went to establish the Doctrine of *One individual God in Trinity* ; to abolish the diversity of species in God, not the distinction of *here* and *there* in substance. When St. *Paul* asked the *Corinthians*, *Is Christ divided ?* he did not think they thought him impossible to be considered as having hands and feet ; but that they might think him (according to the manner of the Gentiles) one of the Sons of God, as *Arius* did ; but not the only begotten Son of God. And thus also it is expounded in the Creed of *Athanasius*, who was present in that Council, by these words, *Not confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substances* ; that is to say, that God is not divided into three Persons, as man is divided into *Peter*, *James*, and *John* ; nor are the three persons one and the same person. But *Aristotle*, and from him all the *Greek Fathers*, and other Learned Men, when they distinguish the general Latitude of a word, they call it Division ; as when they divide *Animal* into Man and Beast, they call these *εἶδη*, *Species* ; and when they again divide the *species* Man, into *Peter* and *John*, they call these *μέρη*, *partes individuae*. And by this confounding the division of the substance with the distinction of words, divers men have been led into the Error of attributing to God a Name, which is not the name of any substance at all, *viz. Incorporeal*.

By these words, *God has no parts*, thus explained, together with the part of the *Creed* which was at that time agreed on, many of those Heresies which were antecedent to that first General Council, were condemned ; as that of *Menes*, who appeared about thirty years before the Reign of *Constantine*, by the first Article, *I believe in one God* ; though in other words it seems to me to remain still in the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, which so ascribeth a Liberty of the Will to Men, as that their Will and Purpose to commit sin, should not proceed from the Cause of all things, God ; but originally from themselves, or from the Devil. It may seem perhaps to some, that by the same words the *Anthropomorphites* also were then Condemned : And certainly, if by Parts were

were meant not persons Individual, but Pieces, they were Condemned : for Face, Arms, Feet, and the like, are pieces. But this cannot be, for the *Anthropomorphites* appeared not till the time of *Valens* the Emperour, which was after the Council of *Nice* between forty and fifty years ; and was not condemned till the second General Council at *Constantinople*.

Now for the Punishment of Hereticks ordained by *Constantine*, we read of none ; but that Ecclesiastical Officers, Bishops and other Preachers, if they refused to subscribe to this Faith, or taught the contrary Doctrine, were for the first Fault Deprived of their Offices , and for the second Banned. And thus did Heresie, which at first was the name of private Opinion, and no Crime, by vertue of a Law of the Emperour, made only for the Peace of the Church, become a Crime in a Pastor, and punishable with Deprivation first, and next with Banishment.

After this part of the Creed was thus established, there arose presently many new Heresies, partly about the Interpretation of it, and partly about the Holy Ghost, of which the *Nicene* Council had not determined. Concerning the part established, there arose Disputes about the Nature of Christ, and the word *Hypostasis*, *id est*, Substance ; for of Persons there was yet no mention made, the Creed being written in *Greek*, in which Language there is no word that answereth to the *Latine* word *Persona*. And the Union, as the Fathers called it, of the Humane and Divine Nature in Christ, *Hypostatical*, caused *Eutyches*, and after him *Dioscorus*, to affirm, there was but one Nature in Christ ; thinking that whensoever two things are united, they are one : and this was condemned as *Arianism* in the Councils of *Constantinople* and *Ephesus*. Others, because they thought two living and rational Substances, such as are God and Man, must needs be also two *Hypostases*, maintained that Christ had two *Hypostases* : But these were two Heresies condemned together. Then concerning the Holy Ghost, *Nestorius* Bishop of *Constantinople*, and some others, denied the Divinity thereof. And whereas about seventy years before the *Nicene* Council, there had been holden a Provincial Council at *Carthage*, wherein it was Decreed, that those Christians which
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in the Persecutions had denied the Faith of Christ, should not be received again into the Church, unless they were again baptized : This also was condemned, though the President in that Council were that most sincere and pious Christian, *Cyprian*. But at last the Creed was made up entire as we have it, in the *Calcedonian* Council, by addition of these words, And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son: Who with the Father & the Son together is worshipped and glorified. Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one Catholick & Apostolick Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the Remission of Sins. And I look for the Resurrection of the Dead, and the Life of the World to come. In this addition are condemned, first the *Nestorians* and others, in these words, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified : And secondly the Doctrine of the Council of *Carthage*, in these words, I believe one Baptism for the Remission of Sins : For one Baptism is not there put as opposite to several sorts or manners of Baptism, but to the iteration of it : St. *Cyprian* was a better Christian than to allow any Baptism that was not in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In the General Confession of Faith contained in the Creed called the *Nicene* Creed, there is no mention of *Hypostasis*, nor of Hypostatical Union, nor of Corporeal, nor of Incorporeal, nor of Parts ; the understanding of which words being not required of the Vulgar, but only of the Pastors, whose disagreement else might trouble the Church ; nor were such Points necessary to Salvation, but set abroad for ostentation of Learning, or else to dazzle men, with design to lead them towards some ends of their own. The Changes of prevalence in the Empire between the *Catholicks* and the *Arians*, and how the great *Athanasius*, the most fierce of the *Catholicks*, was banished by *Constantine*, and afterwards restored, and again banished, I let pass ; only it is to be remembred, that *Athanasius* composed his Creed then, when (banished) he was in Rome, *Liberius* being Pope ; by whom, as is most likely, the word *Hypostasis*, as it was in *Athanasius's* Creed, was disliked : For the Roman Church could never be brought to receive it, but instead thereof used their own word *Persona*. But the first and last

words of that *Creed* the Church of *Rome* refused not : for they make every Article, not only those of the body of the *Creed*, but all the Definitions of the *Nicene* Fathers to be such, as a man cannot be saved, unless he believe them all stedfastly ; though made only for Peace sake, and to unite the mindes of the Clergy, whose Disputes were like to trouble the Peace of the Empire. After these four first General Councils, the Power of the *Roman* Church grew up apace ; and either by the negligence or weakness of the succeeding Emperours, the Pope did what he pleased in Religion. There was no Doctrine which tended to the Power Ecclesiastical, or to the Reverence of the Clergy, the contradiction whereof was not by one Council or another made Heresie, and punished arbitrarily by the Emperours with Banishment or Death. And at last Kings themselves, and Commonwealths, unless they purged their Dominions of Hereticks, were Excommunicated, Interdicted, and their Subjects let loose upon them by the Pope ; insomuch as to an ingenuous and serious Christian, there was nothing so dangerous as to enquire concerning his own Salvation, of the Holy Scripture ; the careless cold Christian was safe, and the skillful Hypocrite a Saint. But this is a Story so well known, as I need not insist upon it any longer, but proceed to the Hereticks here in *England*, and what Punishments were ordained for them by Acts of Parliament. All this while the Penal Laws against Hereticks were such, as the several Princes and States, in their own Dominions, thought fit to enact. The Edicts of the Emperours made their Punishments Capital, but for the manner of the Execution, left it to the Prefects of Provinces : and when other Kings and States intended (according to the Laws of the *Roman* Church) to extirpate Hereticks, they ordained such Punishment as they pleased. And the first Law that was here made for the punishments of Hereticks called *Lollards*, and mentioned in the Statutes, was in the fifth year of the Reign of *Richard* the Second, occasioned by the Doctrine of *John Wickliff* and his Followers ; which *Wickliff*, because no Law was yet ordained for his punishment in Parliament, by

by the favour of *John of Gaunt*, the Kings Son, escaped. But in the fifth year of the next King, which was *Richard the Second*, there passed an Act of Parliament to this effect; That Sheriffs and some others should have Commissions to apprehend such as were certified by the Prelates to be Preachers of Heresie, their Fautors, Maintainers and Abettors, and to hold them in strong Prison, till they should justify themselves, according to the Law of Holy Church. So that hitherto there was no Law in *England*, by which a Heretick could be put to Death, or otherways punished, than by imprisoning him till he was reconciled to the Church. After this, in the next Kings Reign, which was *Henry the Fourth*, Son of *John of Gaunt* by whom *Wickliffe* had been favoured, and who in his aspiring to the Crown had needed the good Will of the Bishops, was made a Law, in the second Year of his Reign, wherein it was Enacted, That every Ordinary may convene before him, and imprison any person suspected of Heresie; and that an obstinate Heretick shall be burnt before the People.

In the next King's Reign, which was *Henry the Fifth*, in his Second year, was made an Act of Parliament, wherein it is declared, that the intent of Hereticks, called *Lollards*, was to subvert the Christian Faith, the Law of God, the Church and the Realm: And, that an Heretick convict should forfeit all his Fee-simple Lands, Goods and Chattels, besides the Punishment of Burning. Again, in the Five and Twentieth Year of King *Henry the Eighth*, it was Enacted, That an Heretick convict shall abjure his Heresies, and refusing so to do, or relapsing, shall be burnt in open place, for example of others. This Act was made after the putting down of the Pope's Authority: and by this it appears, that King *Henry the Eighth* intended no farther alteration in Religion, than the recovering of his own Right Ecclesiastical. But in the first year of his Son King *Edward the Sixth* was made an Act, by which were repealed not only this Act, but also all former Acts concerning Doctrines, or matters of Religion; So that at this time there was no Law at all for the punishment of Hereticks.

Again,

Again, in the Parliament of the first and second Year of Queen Mary, this Act of 1 *Edw.* 6. was not repealed, but made useles, by reviving the Statute of 25 *Henn.* 8. and freely put it in execution ; infomuch as it was Debated, Whether or no they should proceed upon that Statute against the Lady *Elizabeth*, the Queens Sister.

The Lady *Elizabeth* not long after (by the Death of Queen Mary coming to the Crown) in the fifth Year of her Reign, by Act of Parliament repealed in the first place all the Laws Ecclesiastical of Queen Mary, with all other former Laws concerning the punishments of Hereticks, nor did she Enact any other Punishments in their place. In the second place it was Enacted, That the Queen by her Letters Patents should give a Commission to the Bishops, with certain other persons, in her Majesties Name, to execute the Power Ecclesiastical ; in which Commission the Commissioners were forbidden to adjudge any thing to be Heresie, which was not declared to be Heresie by some of the first four General Councils : but there was no mention made of General Councils, but onely in that branch of the Act which Authorized that Commission, commonly called *The High Commission* ; nor was there in that Commission any thing concerning how Hereticks were to be punished, but it was granted to them, that they might declare or not declare, as they pleased, to be Heresie or not Heresie ; any of those Doctrines which had been Condemned for Heresie in the first Four General Councils. So that during the time that the said High Commission was in being, there was no Statute by which a Heretick could be punished otherways, than by the ordinary Censures of the Church ; nor Doctrine accounted Heresie, unless the Commissioners had actually declared and published, That all that which was made Heresie by those Four Councils, should be Heresie also now : but I never heard that any such Declaration was made either by Proclamation, or by Recording it in Churches, or by publick Printing, as in penal Laws is necessary ; the breaches of it are excused by ignorance : besides, if Heresie had been made Capital, or otherwise civilly punishable, either the Four General

neral Councils themselves, or at least the Points condemned in them, ought to have been Printed or put into Parish-Churches in English, because without it, no man could know how to beware of offending against them.

Some man may perhaps ask, whether no body were Condemned and burnt for Heresie, during the time of the High Commission.

I have heard there were: but they which approve such executions, may peradventure know better grounds for them then I do; but those grounds are very well worthy to be enquired after.

Lastly, in the seventeenth year of the Reign of King Charles the First, shortly after that the Scots had Rebellionly put down the Episcopal Government in Scotland, the Presbyterians of England endeavoured the same here. The King, though he saw the Rebels ready to take the Field, would not condescend to that; but yet in hope to appease them, was content to pass an Act of Parliament for the abolishing the High Commission. But though the High Commission were taken away, yet the Parliament having other ends besides the setting up of the Presbyterate, pursued the Rebellion, and put down both Episcopacy and Monarchy, erecting a power by them called *The Common-wealth* by others the *Rump*, which men obeyed not out of Duty, but for fear, nor was there any humane Laws left in force to restrain any man from Preaching or Writing any Doctrine concerning Religion that he pleased; and in this heat of the War, it was impossible to disturb the Peace of the State, which then was none.

And in this time it was, that a Book called *Leviathan*, was written in defence of the Kings Power, Temporal and Spiritual, without any word against Episcopacy, or against any Bishop, or against the publick Doctrine of the Church. It pleased God about Twelve years after the Usurpation of this *Rump*, to Restore His most Gracious Majesty that now is, to his Fathers Throne, and presently His Majesty restored the Bishops, and pardoned the Presbyterians; but then both the one and the other accused in Parliament this Book of Heresie, when neither the Bishops before the War had declared what was

Hereſie, when if they had, it had been made void by the putting down of the High Commiſſion at the importunity of the Presbyterians: So fierce are men, for the moſt part, in diſpute, where either their Learning or Power is debated; that they never think of the Laws, but as ſoon as they are offended, they cry out, *Cruciſige*; forgetting what *St. Paul* ſaith, even in caſe of obſtinate holding of an Errour, *2 Tim.* 2. 24, 25. *The ſervant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekneſs inſtructing thoſe that oppoſe, if God peradventure may give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth: Of which counſel, ſuch fierceneſs as hath appeared in the Diſputation of Divines, down from before the Council of Nice to this preſent time, is a Violation.*

FINIS.
